

## ***Interactive comment on “Microbial assemblages on a cold-water coral mound at the SE Rockall Bank (NE Atlantic): interactions with hydrography and topography” by J. D. L. van Bleijswijk et al.***

**J. D. L. van Bleijswijk et al.**

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Received and published: 9 June 2015

We wish to thank the reviewer for the efforts and input provided. We carefully went through all the comments and suggestions. We have adjusted the manuscript according to the comments made. Below we provide a description of the adjustments made, addressing the reviewers remarks.

This manuscript describes the microbial community in a cold water coral environment and links it to environmental parameters including water flow and topography. For the first time, Archaea are detected in coral mucus. Major point: Neuling et al and Kellogg at all report on two potential symbionts of *Lophelia* and Hansson et al. on one

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of *Madrepora*. It is somewhat startling that the authors completely ignore that. It is imperative to address this question: do their data support that or not.

Response: We now give rightful credit to Emblem et al. (2012). To our knowledge it is still the first time that archaea were found in mucus. We revised the text. *Mycoplasma* was reported for *L. pertusa* tissue. We did not sample tissue but fully agree that this aspect should get more attention in our manuscript. We found low amounts of *Mycoplasma* in uneroded (recently deceased) skeleton but not in mucus. (P13, L329-330; P18, L446-452). We also address TM7 and give credit to the authors you mention.

Minor points: Where are the sequences deposited?

Response: Datafiles will be available via ENA once the paper is accepted.

The size of the collected corals is not mentioned. Is there information on the type of branches (old vs young)?

Response: Now described in the text: ~0.5 cm. young branches were white and uneroded without biofilm; old skeleton was eroded, brownish and with biofilm.

How long lasted the incubation for collecting mucus?

Response: We collected ~0.5 mL mucus according to Schottner et al. 2012 and incubated 2-3 minutes.

Please also note the supplement to this comment:

<http://www.biogeosciences-discuss.net/12/C2707/2015/bgd-12-C2707-2015-supplement.pdf>

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Interactive comment on Biogeosciences Discuss., 12, 1509, 2015.

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